



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THREE MEXICAN NATIONALS CHARGED WITH TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that three Mexican nationals have been charged in federal court with transporting illegal aliens in two separate and unrelated cases.

* **Hortencia Solis-Nieto**, 30, and **Rosa Plancarte-Herrera**, 24, both citizens of Mexico, were charged with transporting illegal aliens within the United States in a criminal complaint that was filed in U.S. District Court in Springfield on March 17, 2005.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the indictment, both women, illegally present in the United States, were traveling on U.S. Hwy. 60 eastbound in Mountain View, Mo., in a 1997 Chevrolet Astro van that was stopped by law enforcement officers on March 10, 2005. The van, driven by **Solis-Nieto**, also contained nine male subjects who are allegedly illegal aliens from Mexico.

According to the affidavit, the nine men each paid a smuggler \$1,800 to be transported to North Carolina. After being smuggled into the United States and transported to Phoenix, the affidavit says, they were kept in a house for six or seven days before being picked up in the van by **Solis-Nieto** and **Plancarte-Herrera**.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

* **Yovani Diaz-Cruz**, 23, a citizen of Mexico, was charged with transporting illegal aliens within the United States in a criminal complaint that was filed in U.S. District Court in Springfield on March 17, 2005.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the federal criminal complaint, officers of the Joplin, Mo., Police Department encountered a 1995 GMC Safari van parked at the corner of

Main and F Street in Joplin. Officers observed **Diaz-Cruz** and another Hispanic male sitting in the van, as well as a group of 12 other Hispanic males hiding under a nearby bridge.

The affidavit alleges that all of the men were illegal aliens traveling within the United States. Most of the men, the affidavit says, claimed that they paid between \$1,000 and \$2,000 for transportation from Phoenix, Ariz., to Georgia or Kentucky. **Diaz-Cruz** was hired to transport the group, the affidavit says, leaving Phoenix on March 11, 2005, headed to various locations in Atlanta, Ga., Kentucky and Tennessee.

The affidavit also alleges that **Diaz-Cruz** was deported from the United States twice in 2003.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Joplin, Mo., Police Department.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the criminal complaints are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow